attractive include the facility to convert the entire export earnings at market rate of exchange, delegation and decentralisation of powers and simplification of policy/procedures.

Non Payment of salaries to Employees of M.T.C.

737. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 1,000 workers of the Mica Trading Corporation of India Limited have not been getting their salaries since November, 1992;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are being taken to pay their salaries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Due to acute financial constraints, MITCO has not been able to pay the salaries of its employees since November, 1992. The case of MITCO has been referred to BIFR as a sick industrial company for a decision on the future of the company.

US Investigation against Indian Exporters

738. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US administration has decided to launch anti-dumping investigations against twenty Indian exporters of steel flanges; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The US administration has decided to launch anti-dumping investigations in response to an anti-dumping petition against import of steel flanges from India. Fourteen Indian exporters of steel flanges have been named in the petition.

(b) The US International Trade Commission has made a preliminary affirmative determination in the case on 9 Februray, 1993. A similar determination has been made in respect of steel flanges imported from Taiwan. No anti-dumping duties are imposed at this stage. As a result of the ITC's determination, the US Department of Commerce will continue to conduct anti-dumping investigations in the case.

A general protectionist trend has been discerned in the USA and this is manifested by increased reliance placed on anti-dumping and countervailing duty actions.

Promoting Exports

739. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI IQBAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of India's exports and imports during the first nine months of the current financial year;

(b) what is the manner in which these compare with those of the same period of the last two years; and

(c) the details of steps taken by Government to increase exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The details of India's exports and imports during the first nine months i.e. April-December, 1992-93 as compared with those of the same period during 1990-91 and 1991-92 are as under:—

(Value : Rs. Crores)

April-Dec. 1990-91	April-Dec. 1991-92	April-Dec. 1992-93
23189	30332	37329
31724	34238	47480

(c) Several changes in trade policy were introduced since July, 1991 aimed at strengthening export incentives, eliminating a substantial volume of import licensing and retionalising the import tariff structure. Rupee has been made partially convertible to encourage generation of foreign exchange. These have been further consolidated in the new Export-Import Policy which, *inter-alia*, aims to promote productivity,